

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PINT, PGOV, AU

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY MOTION BY PEOPLE'S PARTY FOR  
EARLY ELECTIONS

SUMMARY: PEOPLE'S PARTY (OVP) PUT FORWARD SURPRISE  
MOTION IN PARLIAMENT JAN. 23 FOR EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS  
EITHER IN MAY OR JUNE. FIRST REACTION OF SOCIALIST  
(SPO) LEADERS WAS TO REITERATE PREFERENCE FOR  
ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER. OVP MOVE IS EFFORT TO FORCE  
DECISION ON FIRM ELECTION DATE. SOCIALIST EXECUTIVE  
BOARD WILL MEET JAN. 28 AND OVP CONVINCED SOCIALISTS  
WILL STAY WITH OCTOBER DATE. END SUMMARY.

1. OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S PARTY PUT FORWARD MOTION LATE  
AFTERNOON JAN. 23, AT END OF JANUARY PARLIAMENTARY  
SESSION, FOR DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT AND SCHEDULING  
OF EARLY ELECTIONS SO THAT NEW GOVERNMENT COULD  
ASSUME OFFICE ON JULY 8. IF MOTION CARRIED, NATIONAL  
ELECTIONS WOULD THEN BE SCHEDULED FOR EITHER MAY OR JUNE.  
CITED AS GROUNDS FOR MOTION WERE CURRENT POOR STATE OF  
GOVERNMENT FINANCES, PROVIDING OF MORE TIME FOR NEW  
GOVERNMENT TO PREPARE DRAFT 1976 BUDGET AND AVOIDANCE OF  
SUBJECTING VOTERS TO LENGTHY (EXPENSIVE) ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

2. MOTION CAUGHT SOCIALIST AND FREEDOM PARTIES BY  
SURPRISE. INITIAL REACTION OF SOCIALIST LEADERS--  
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CHANCELLOR KREISKY AND NATIONAL COUNCIL PRESIDENT BENYA--

WAS TO INDICATE CONTINUING PERSONAL PREFERENCE FOR HOLDING ELECTIONS, AS SCHEDULED, IN EARLY OCTOBER. KREISKY AND BENYA NOTED AT SAME TIME THAT MATTER IS DECISION FOR PARTY WHICH WILL BE SEIZED WITH ISSUE AT ITS EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING ON JAN. 28.

3. FREEDOM PARTY CHAIRMAN PETER, ALSO IN INITIAL REACTION, STATED THAT OPPOSITION PARTY HAS TO BE READY TO CONTEST ELECTIONS AT ANY TIME AND THAT HIS PARTY COULD SUPPORT MOTION FOR EARLY ELECTIONS.

4. IN TERMS OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE, MOTION WILL BE SENT TO CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ITS ACTION AT NEXT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT WHICH SCHEDULED FEB. 19. COMMITTEE CAN EITHER DO NOTHING WITH MOTION OR PUT MOTION TO DISCUSSION. IN LATTER CASE, BROAD-RANGING, MAJOR DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT POLICIES CAN BE ANTICIPATED.

5. SOCIALIST PARTY MEETING JAN. 28 WILL PROBABLY GIVE DEFINITIVE ANSWER ON DATE FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS WHICH WAS BASIC PURPOSE OF PEOPLE'S PARTY MOTION. OVP SECRETARY GENERAL KOHLMAIER TOLD US TODAY THAT HIS PARTY NEEDS TO KNOW FOR OBVIOUS REASONS ELECTION DATE. ADDITIONAL MOTIVES FOR MOTION REPORTEDLY WERE DESIRE TO CAST OVP IN PUBLIC MIND AS SERIOUS CHALLENGER SOCIALISTS AND TO FOCUS ATTENTION OF PARTY OFFICIALS ON BEATING SOCIALISTS, NOTBELABORING OWN PARTY FOR SHORTCOMINGS. OVP PREFERENCE FOR EARLY ELECTIONS BASED ON WHAT FELT TO BE FROM OVP VIEWPOINT FAVORABLE INTERNAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS AND FINANCIAL AND INTERNAL PARTY CONSIDERATIONS. OVP LEADERSHIP CONVINCED THAT SOCIALISTS WILL DECIDE AT JAN. 28 MEETING TO STAY WITH EARLY OCTOBER DATE FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS.HUMES

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